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Shepton Mallet Urban District Council.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year Ending 31st December, 1946

Shepton Mallet Urban District Council

CHAIRMAN :

BERKELEY HALL, Esq., J.P.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH :

T. E. COULSON, M.D., F.R.C.S.E.

SANITARY INSPECTOR :

D. T. G. BROWN (retired in July, 1946).

SANITARY INSPECTOR :

G. F. HAWKINS, CERT. S.I. JT. BOARD. CERT. R.S.I. (MEAT & OTHER FOODS)
(Appointed July, 1946).

CLERK :

A. D. STOCKDALE.

WINCANTON,
SOMERSET.

July, 1947.

TO THE
SHEPTON MALLET URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to lay before you my Annual Report for the year 1946.

1.—GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (in acres) ...	...	...	...	...	2259
Population (1946) ...	...	...	...	...	4798
Number of Inhabited Houses (1946) ...	...	...	...	...	1298
Rateable Value ...	...	...	...	...	£25,490
Produce of Penny Rate (estimated) ...	...	...	...	...	£102

Number of Inhabited Houses is based on the following :—

Dwelling Houses ...	...	...	...	...	1186
Prison Houses ...	...	...	...	...	6
Houses and Shops ...	...	...	...	...	75
Hotels and Inns ...	...	...	...	...	22
Clubs with Living Accommodation ...	...	...	...	...	2
Agricultural Dwelling Houses ...	...	...	...	...	22
Total ...	...	...	...	...	1313
Less voids (estimated) ...	...	...	...	...	15
					1298

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

There are no large industries in the Urban District, although there are extensive premises in Commercial Road, formerly used as a Cider Factory, but now in the course of re-development. The main sources of employment, in addition to the shops, offices and building trades, are : cider factories (2), breweries (2), millers, glove factories (2), bacon factory, shoe factory, railways, agricultural engineering, dry-cleaning works.

There is very little unemployment other than that of a transitory nature.

2.—EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

BIRTHS.

Live Births :—		Males.	Females.	
Total ...	...	39	36	
Legitimate ...	...	35	34	
Illegitimate ...	...	4	2	Birth Rate :—19.1 per 1,000
Still Births :—		Males.	Females.	
Total ...	...	0	2	
Legitimate ...	...	0	2	
Illegitimate ...	...	0	0	Birth Rate :—0.53 per 1,000.

DEATHS.

	Total	Males.	Females.	
Deaths from all causes	52	22	30	Death Rate :—11.5 per 1,000.

Number of Women dying in, or in consequence of, child-birth :—

(a) From Sepsis ...	...	...	...	0
(b) From other causes ...	...	...	...	0

Deaths of Infants under One Year of age :—

Legitimate, 3 ; Illegitimate, 0 ; Total, 3.		
Deaths of Infants under One Week ...	...	1
" " " from One to Four Weeks ...	...	2
" " " from One to Six Months ...	...	0
" " " from Six to Twelve Months ...	...	0
Total ...	...	3

Deaths from Measles (all ages)	0
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	0
„ „ Diarrhœa (under two years of age)	0

There has not been any excessive mortality during the year.

The total number of Deaths occurring in the District was 52, compared with 63 in 1945.

The chief causes of Death were :—

Cancer	12
Heart and Circulatory Diseases	14
Old Age	9
Cerebral Hæmorrhage	4

In these four “ Causes of Death ” :

Those dying between the ages of 75 and 80 were ...	10
„ „ „ „ „ „ 81 and 85 were ...	8
„ „ „ „ „ „ 86 and 90 were ...	7
Those dying above the age of 90 were ...	1

A total of 26 or 50% of the total Deaths.

3.—NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

Diseases.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Isolation Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Malaria	1	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	3	0	0
Scarlet Fever	9	8	0
Pneumonia (all forms)	1	0	2
Whooping Cough	15	1	0
Measles	15	0	0
Erysipelas	4	1	0
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	2	2	1
Tuberculosis :—Total	7	0	4
(a) Respiratory	5	0	4
(b) Non-respiratory	2	0	0

The notification of Infectious Diseases in the District by Medical Practitioners was satisfactory, except in cases of Pneumonia.

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.

No Cases Notified.

4.—CAUSES OF SICKNESS.

The cases of Scarlet Fever notified to me were of a mild type, and there were no deaths.

Pneumonia caused 2 deaths.

There was a fairly widespread epidemic of measles during the first half of the year. The cases were of a mild type and there were no deaths.

5.—SUMMARY OF NURSING ARRANGEMENTS, HOSPITAL AND OTHER

INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE IN THE DISTRICT.

A.—PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME.

- (1) General :—There are 2 Nurses in the District engaged in general district work, who are affiliated to the County Nursing Association.
- (2) For Infectious Diseases :—Some of the cases of infectious diseases were removed to the Isolation Hospital, the remainder were either nursed by their relatives or by nurses obtained from Nursing Homes or Hospitals outside the District.

B.—MIDWIVES.

There are 2 Certified Midwives practising in the District.

C.—CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

There is one Tuberculosis Dispensary in Charlton Road, provided and staffed by the County Council.

D.—HOSPITALS AVAILABLE FOR THE DISTRICT.

(1) Tuberculosis : None.

(2) Fever :—One (The Joint Isolation Hospital, Shepton Mallet) to which the following cases were admitted during the year :—

Disease.	Total No. Admitted.	No. Died.
Scarlet Fever	31	1
For Observation	5	0
Dysentery	1	0
Diphtheria	7	0
Erysipelas	3	0
Bronchitis	2	0
Influenza	3	0
Tonsilitis	2	0
Whooping Cough	5	0
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	4	1
Poliomyelitis	3	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	0
Inflammation of Arm	1	0
Chicken Pox	1	0
	—	—
	60	2
	—	—

(3) Other :—There is one District Hospital at Shepton Mallet for the treatment of general medical and surgical cases. There is no Public Assistance Institution, the building having been taken over by The County Council as an Institution for persons suffering from Mental Deficiency.

E.—INSTITUTIONAL PROVISION FOR UNMARRIED MOTHERS AND ILLEGITIMATE INFANTS : None.

Homeless Children : Hillworth House, staffed and equipped by the Somerset County Council.

F.—AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

(1) For Infectious Cases :—A Motor Ambulance is kept at the Isolation Hospital for the collection and removal of the Infectious Cases.

(2) For Non-Infectious Cases and Accidents :—A Motor Ambulance supplied and equipped by The Shepton Mallet Urban District Council is kept at the Wells Road Garage, Shepton Mallet, Telephone 126 ; and in case of need additional ambulances are obtainable through the local branch of the B.R.C.S. and also from Wells and Radstock.

G.—SCABIES.—No cases of Scabies have been reported to me.

6.—LABORATORY WORK.

Examinations of bacteriological and pathological specimens are carried out at The Public Health Laboratory, Taunton : considerable use of this Laboratory has been made during the year.

A supply of Diphtheria Antitoxin is kept at The District Hospital, Shepton Mallet, and is supplied free on demand by Practitioners practising in the District.

7.—PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

There is one Sanitary Inspector and Housing and Sanitary Surveyor (a whole-time officer) and myself (a part-time officer). There is one Health Visitor in the District.

8.—WATER SUPPLIES.

The extension of water mains for supplying the new housing estate at Shepton Mallet (Compton Road) was commenced during the year and the work is still in progress.

A short extension of 5" water main was also laid for a distance of about 100 yards along West Shepton Road.

The Shepton Mallet Waterworks Company state that no shortages occurred during 1946.

The extensions of the mains on the Housing Estate fall to be completed and improvement of supplies in the Compton Road area, by the provision of a trunk main, is under consideration. The mains on the Housing Estate will probably eventually be extended to loop up with existing mains at West Shepton.

9.—DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

Considerable extensions of sewers were completed during 1946, at the Council's housing estate adjoining Compton Road. The opportunity was taken by the Council to construct a short length of sewer to serve three houses at Westway Lane, and at two of these properties the drainage has been connected to the sewer and the cesspools abolished.

10.—CAMPING SITES.

No Camping Sites have been registered in the District.

Generally the only cases of Camping which occurred were only of 2 or 3 days' duration, except in the case of The Fair Ground in Cook's Paddock, the duration of which is usually about one or two weeks.

11.—HOUSING.

(a) Total Number of Applicants for Council Houses at the end of 1946, 363.

(b) Houses erected by :—

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|------|
| (i) Local Authority | ... | Nil. |
| (ii) Private Enterprise | ... | Nil. |

(c) Houses in course of erection by :—

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|---|
| (i) Local Authority | ... | 40 (Parlour type 20 ; Non-Parlour type 20). |
| (ii) Private Enterprise | ... | Nil. |

(d) Programme of New Houses to be erected by the Local Authority :—

First Year, 40 ; Second Year, 40 ; Third Year, 40 ; Fourth Year, 40.

Whilst the Council continue to receive numerous applications for housing accommodation there is little evidence of premises being overcrowded according to the standards of the Housing Act, 1936. There is, however, a considerable demand for housing accommodation arising principally from applicants living (a) in insanitary houses, and (b) in houses shared with relatives.

Although considerable efforts are being made, on the whole with success, to provide houses for those in urgent need of them, it is hoped that the programme set out above will be able to be completed, as there are numerous families in the Town living in houses unfit for human habitation owing to their insanitary and dilapidated condition, the absence of the ordinary amenities such as a larder, sink, bath, separate lavatory accommodation and so on, and, in some cases, the lack of fresh air and sunlight.

12.—MINISTRY OF HEALTH INQUIRIES.

None.

13.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a) MILK :

1.—Total Number of Registered Dairy Farms	...	21
2.—Number of Retailers	...	7
3.—Number of Producer-Retailers included in 2	...	2
4.—Number of Licensed Pasteurising Plants	...	1
5.—Number of Heat-Treatment Plants not included in 4	...	0

NO. OF T.T. LICENSES :

- | |
|---|
| 1 To Produce and Bottle (granted by County Council). |
| 1 To Bottle and Retail (granted by Urban District Council). |
| 1 To Retail (granted by Urban District Council). |

Two farmers distribute in the Shepton Mallet Urban District, but their farms are in the Shepton Mallet Rural District.

(b) MEAT SUPERVISION :

Number of Licenced Slaughter Houses in the District	3
Number of Registered Slaughter Houses in the District	1
Total	4

Names of any in use under the Ministry of Food

The C.W.S. Bacon Factory, Charlton Road,
Shepton Mallet.

Knackers' Yards—Licenced	0
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The following facts have been reported to me by the Sanitary Inspector :—

PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES.

The whole of the Urban District is supplied by the Shepton Mallet Water Company, the water being obtained from springs at Windsor Hill.

Chlorination :—All water is chlorinated.

Samples	Satisfactory	...	...	...	3
	Not quite satisfactory	...	...	...	0
	Unsatisfactory	...	...	...	0
Water Shortage	...	...	...	...	0

PRIVATE SUPPLIES :—A few properties have private wells still in use. A sample taken from such a well supplying three cottages was found to shew marked evidence of contamination and to be unfit for drinking purposes. The Council have pressed the Owner to provide a service from the Public Main about 220 yards from the property.

SEWERAGE :—Number of Samples of Effluent, 1. Satisfactory.

DETAILS OF SANITARY INSPECTIONS.

(N.B.—For July to December only).

Total Number of Inspections under all headings	...	593
Ditto	Informal Notices served	12
Ditto	Informal Notices complied with	5
Ditto	Statutory Notices served	Nil.
Ditto	Statutory Notices complied with	Nil.

No. of Inspections carried out under :

(a) Factories Act	...	...	...	...	3
(b) Shops Acts	...	...	...	...	Nil.

Number of sanitary inspections of schools, giving particulars of works or alterations effected as a result of notices served informal or formal :—

Number of inspections	...	...	...	...	2
Works or alterations effected	...	...	...	...	Nil.

HOUSING :—

1.	No. of houses inspected for housing defects under Public Health or Housing Acts	...	...	...	84
	No. of Inspections made for the purpose	...	...	...	118
2.	No. of dwellinghouses inspected and recorded under Housing Consolidated Regulations	...	...	...	7
	No. of inspections made for the purpose	...	...	...	15
3.	No. of dwellinghouses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	18

4. No. of dwellinghouses (exclusive of those referred to in the previous sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	33
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REMEDY OF DEFECTS WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICE :

No. of defective dwellinghouses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers... ..	2
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ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS Nil

No. of houses inspected for use in connection with Evacuation or inadequately housed persons	21
No. of inspections made	79
No. of properties requisitioned by the Council	30

INFECTIOUS DISEASE—SANITARY SUPERVISION.

No. of visits of investigation	7
Ditto re Disinfection	8
Ditto miscellaneous visits	4
No. of rooms fumigated	5

HOUSE REFUSE.

The Council undertake a weekly collection of house refuse from the whole District. The work was formerly carried out by contract, but as the Contractor gave up, the Council purchased their own vehicle and the work is now carried out by direct labour. The purchase of a modern covered refuse collection motor vehicle to replace the present open lorry, has been decided upon.

SALVAGE :—

The following results were obtained during the year :—

Description of Material Salvaged, and disposed of	Weight.		
	T.	C.	Q.
Mixed waste paper	39	19	0
Textiles (rags, sacking, etc.)	4	4	3
Ferrous scrap	56	3	0
Non-Ferrous scrap		2	1
Bones	2	12	3
Kitchen waste	49	5	0
Bottles, jars, etc. (85½ gross)	5	0	0
Sales Value of the above	£568/16/1.		

MILK SAMPLES :—

The undermentioned milk samples were taken :—

	Satis- factory.	Unsatis- factory.	Total.
Accredited	13	1	14
Tuberculin Tested	3	—	3
Heat-treated	3	1	4
Pasteurised	3	—	3
Tests for Tuberculosis	9	—	9
Total	31	2	33

MEAT AND FOOD INSPECTION :—

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

No. of post-mortem-inspections	25
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The following are the particulars relating to the C.W.S. Bacon Factory for the whole year :—

No. of pigs killed	22,854
Diseased conditions found :—	
No. of whole carcasses : (pigs)	26
(sows)	1
Total	27
No. of : Heads	2,112
Plucks	1,227
Kidneys	57
Steaks	76

No. of inspections carried out at other food premises :—

(a) Premises registered for the sale or manufacture of ice-cream, etc.	...	...	...	...	11
(b) Food Premises otherwise subject to the Food and Drugs Act, 1938	...	...	...	...
Butchers' shops and stalls	...	...	...	...	14
Fishmongers	...	...	...	...	3
Grocers	...	...	...	...	10
Food-preparing premises	...	...	...	...	9
Restaurants	...	...	...	...	3
Street vendors, vans, etc.	...	...	...	...	5
Milkshops and dairies	...	...	...	...	20
Total	...	...	...	...	64

Particulars of unsound foods voluntarily surrendered as being unfit for human consumption:—

Packages.	Description.	Net Weight (approx.)
2 tins.	Jam	2 lbs
1 „	Marmalade	2 „
1 „	Syrup	2 „
1 jar.	Pickles	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
20 tins.	Beans	20 lbs
3 „	Peas	3 „
1 „	Spaghetti	$\frac{1}{2}$ „
15 packets.	Breakfast cereal	$7\frac{1}{2}$ „
44 tins	Cond. and Evap. Milk	44 „
2 „	Meat and Vegetable ration	2 „
1 „	Meat paste	$\frac{1}{4}$ „
4 „	Stewed steak	4 „
3 „	Minced beef	3 „
2 „	Corned beef	12 „
5 „	Salmon	$4\frac{1}{2}$ „
6 „	Sardines	1 „
—	Beef	27 „
—	Pork (imported)	28 „
—	Mutton (2 carcasses)	83 „
—	Lamb (1 carcass)	70 „
—	Fresh fish (Pollack)	462 „
—	Prunes	...

In addition, one small box of chocolates was submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Taunton, for examination at the request of a medical practitioner, but the Public Analyst reported that the contents were not contaminated or unfit for human consumption.

PLANS :—

The undermentioned plans were submitted to the Council and approved under Building Bye-laws :—

- 10 bungalows for aged persons (to be erected by Local Authority).
- 1 dwellinghouse.
- 1 alterations to dwellinghouse.
- 5 motor garages.
- 6 extensions to factory premises.
- 3 extensions to other premises.

During the year, the Council commenced the erection of forty dwellinghouses, none of which had been completed at the end of 1946. Owing to the prohibition of private building during the second half of the year, no private houses were in course of erection.

(Certificates of Essentiality. The original certificates have been more or less superseded by the Certificates for Essential Materials. No record is kept of these).

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION ACT, 1919.

INFESTATION ORDER, 1943.

The Council have continued the contract with Messrs. Pestex for the investigation and treatment of rats and mice infestations. (No complete information regarding number of premises dealt with, bodies recovered, etc.). The Council also themselves undertake treatment of the refuse tip, sewage farm, etc.

At the request of the Ministry of Food Rodent Division, test baiting of a section of the sewerage system was carried out in the early part of the year, and subsequently a scheme was submitted to and approved by both the Council and the Ministry for the preliminary treatment of all the sewers. The first part of the treatment was carried out, leaving the second part to be done at the beginning of 1947.

Details of other Inspections. (No. of visits).

Water supply ...	...	...	...	...	8
Drainage ...	...	...	...	...	6
Sewers and Sewage Disposal	...	...	...	...	45
Offensive trades ...	...	...	...	...	6
Refuse Collection ...	...	...	...	...	4
Refuse disposal ...	...	...	...	...	35
Public conveniences ...	...	...	...	...	11
Tents, Vans and Sheds ...	...	...	...	...	1
Rats and Mice ...	...	...	...	...	6
Smoke observations ...	...	...	...	...	4
Miscellaneous housing visits	...	...	...	...	51
Miscellaneous sanitary visits	...	...	...	...	87

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

T. E. COULSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

